

Helge Sandøy (ed.), Sine Halkjelsvik Bjordal & Stig Rognes (editorial secretaries), *Norsk språkhistorie*, volume 1, *Mønster*, Oslo: Novus Forlag 2016, ISBN 978-82-7099-847-0, 681 pp.

This first volume of a projected four-volume work on Norwegian history of language was published in 2016. In the editorial group's preface to the whole work, it is emphasised that this will be a modern reference work, that the language development will be explained, that the work will provide information about the connections between the Norwegian language and Norwegian society, that the Norwegian identity—which in different periods has been constructed on a linguistic basis—will be elucidated, that broad perspectives on language will be adopted whereby language structure, language use and social context will be paid attention to, and that non-Norwegian languages that have existed in Norway for a long time will also be included. In the first volume, *Mønster* ['Patterns'], which is reviewed here, form, structure and the grammatical system are described, the second volume will deal with practice and the third with ideology, and in the fourth, *Tidslinjer* ['Time lines'], the threads will be gathered. This is an impressive arrangement, and the broad engagement from the Nordistic environments in Norway vouch for a well-planned work. The first volume about patterns starts with a co-authored chapter by Helge Sandøy and Agnete Nesse on language changes, where from different perspectives they give a description of different processes leading up to language changes on an individual level, group level and societal level, and where among many other different things they focus on the importance of networks and dissemination phenomena. What constitutes the driving forces in the language change process is elucidated in a comprehensive section where one can read about the processes that exist in the language itself, but also about "koineisation processes" and pidgin languages, such as *russenorsk* ['Russo-Norwegian']. A section on the individual versus the collective is important, and so is, to an even greater extent, the last part of this introductory chapter, where the speed of the language changes is focused on. The next chapter is written by Gjert Kristoffersen and Arne Torp and deals with phonology. A short section on phonological analysis is followed by two comprehensive sections, the first of which deals with the period up to Old Norse and the second the period from Old Norse to the present-day dialects. A number of scientific problems are elucidated, e.g. the *i*-umlaut and the Old Norse vowel harmony. The authors wonder whether "the original mel-

odies” in the language can at all be reconstructed—in this connection, the Swedish researcher Tomas Riad is paid attention to but his work is not evaluated in any appreciable detail. Furthermore, the authors analyse vowel balance and vowel harmony, differentiation and a number of other phenomena. In some cases, the description might have benefited from a few maps. However, one instructive map that is included (p. 198) shows burred ‘r’ in Norwegian speakers born in 1900, 1950 and 1970, respectively. In the third chapter, Hans-Olav Enger and Philipp Konzett deal with morphology. The chapter is systematically structured, and the parts of speech are described. Changes are focused on and analysed, simplifications in the archaic systems are described, as are developments that take place rapidly and those that happen gradually. The chapter also focuses on new morphological categories that have appeared. As in other chapters in the book, the reader gets good insights into the research that has been done in the area. In the latter part of the chapter, there is a good description of word formation with compounds, prefix derivation, suffix derivation and back-formation, and finally the question is asked “in what way does word formation change?” The fourth chapter, compiled by Endre Mørck, deals with syntax. The role of morphology in the syntax is initially described with case and concord as themes, and then the structure of sentences and some word-order problems are discussed with the help of clause schemes and rich exemplification. At the very end, there are interesting sections on style and genre variations in Old Norse and dialectal syntax. The latter section is interesting but very short. Among other things, it is pointed out that since some features in the dialectal syntax have a more limited northerly distribution, they may be the result of language contact between Norwegian and Sami-Finnish. Chapter 5 deals with vocabulary and is written by Tor Erik Jenstad. By way of introduction, the vocabulary is more precisely defined by the author, who points out that the lexicon of the language is an open system in constant change. Some parts of the lexicon are more stable than others, however. Inherited words and import words (loan words) are then focused on, followed by a traditional description of loan words from different languages. One heading in this section is “Kebabnorsk” [i.e.: ‘Kebab Norwegian’]. The export of words from Norway and the other Scandinavian languages are then accounted for in a brief section, and an equally short section deals with language geography, unfortunately without supporting maps. Of greater interest is what is said about “ethnically loaded words” in the language. A quintet of authors consisting of Eva Magerøy, Jan Ragnar Hagland, Anders Johansen, Jørgen Magnus Sejersted and Aslaug Veum have written the last chapter of the book,

which deals with texts and genres. It includes a very readable survey of texts and genres from different periods, starting with the period 1600–1800. Among other things, the reader notes with interest a section on popular literacy. The next two parts are about texts from the period after 1800, the first of which deals with textbook genres and newspaper and media genres, among other things, and the second with political rhetoric. Unlike *Dansk sproghistorie*, which is presented elsewhere in this section (see Hjort [ed.] 2016 above), the book is more like a traditional history of language, even though it contains quite a few graphs and a number of illustrations. A final evaluation of the two Nordic works on language history must wait until they have been published in their entirety, but it can even now be stated that both the Norwegian and the Danish works are ambitious projects which will greatly increase our knowledge. After reading these works, one looks forward even more to the new Swedish history of language that is being produced under the auspices of the Swedish Academy. There is a great need for that work, too.

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